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First to Last—the Truth: News—Editorials—Advertisements

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The Bullitt Evidence

Speaking to the American Association on September 5 concerning his Paris experience, Mr. Lansing said:

"With this experience vividly in mind I cannot too strongly assert that international justice, interpreted and applied by an impartial court, can do more to prevent future wars than any agency, single or collective, operating in the field of diplomacy."

Mr. Lansing had previously identified the covenant as operating in the field of diplomacy and had strongly condemned the pseudo-internationalism, which he called "mundanism" (that is, the suppression of nationalism), whose spirit he saw in the covenant. The phraseology was difficult for the ordinary person to understand, and thus his declaration attracted little attention, but he obviously struck at the very roots of the covenant. He showed himself in sympathy with the ideas of Mr. Root, who is willing to ratify the covenant provided its anti-nationalism, or mundanism, is removed, but who sees world order coming by a development of definitions of right agreed to and supported by independent nations.

Aside from the revelation of Mr. Lansing's views, the Bullitt statement throws light on the rapid changes of the Presidential mind. It would seem as if the President often did not comprehend the issues and that he had no matured policies. The defeat of the proposal that league delegates should be chosen by the various national legislative bodies, a scheme that would have secured greater popular control, was due, it appears, to time although urged by Cecil, Smuts and House. It was not known his prejudice in favor of executive control went thus far.

The American people, as Mr. Lansing feared, do not fully understand the treaty. But one point they have grasped—namely, that the covenant as written is opposed to sound nationalism. Hence the demand, steadily growing stronger, for its Americanization—that is, for an open recognition of the principle that we do not waive our sovereignty.

The Unlimited Submarine

A world hope was disappointed at Paris when there was failure to agree on submarine limitation. It was unfortunate that the American delegation was so occupied with barren idealities that it had no time to consider practicalities.

What is to be done? At present the various admiralties seem devoting their energies to multiplying submarines. Great Britain has the K type, a vessel of 2,500 tons, with a speed of 24 knots. It can carry supplies to stay at sea for three months and can travel 12,000 miles. Living on the stores of destroyed merchantmen, it can cruise for a year and circumnavigate the globe.

Our Navy Department follows the British lead. The naval appropriation act provides for an enlarged submarine programme, and Secretary Daniels clamors for more money. France, Japan, Italy, Greece and other nations, when their finances permit, may be counted on to equip themselves. Argentina, Chile and Brazil are seeking to place orders.

The policy is a dubious one. It is admitted by naval experts that the submarine is not a failure. Submarines sank 7,000,000 tons of merchant shipping and were responsible for half the Allied loss in warships. It is also admitted that relatively they give an advantage to the inconsiderate and backward nations over those that have world contacts. The submarine tends to negative sea power and strengthens the piratically disposed. Strange it is that the obvious conclusion is drawn by so few in both Great Britain and the United States. We seem not only to go against world interests, but against our own.

Sooner or later the embargo on German construction will be lifted. Russia will have a fleet of undersea craft, as will also Japan. Is the consequence uncertain? Is any one willing to trust a mere paper agreement to use the submarine legally? Let us not deceive ourselves. If wolf packs exist, and all have them, they will be ferociously used.

The argument that a bad nation will badly use any weapon, and that the submarine is no worse than others, is fallacious. Evil is exceptionally inherent in the submarine.

The other stock argument against submarine limitation is that general espionage would be necessary. Granted, but such espionage seems feasible. Only a few nations now have the technical ability to build submarines, and it is unlikely any could carry on work secretly, or would seek to if they knew such work would be deemed a *casus belli*.

Amazing was the torpidity of our delegation at Paris. If it had pressed for an agreement against further submarine construction the other nations, it may be assumed, would have consented. But its preoccupations were with words and formulas and not with practicalities; now it will be much more difficult to secure the universal acceptance of a general self-denying ordinance.

A Lesson for New York

The sad occurrences in Boston, where men enlisted to protect order have suddenly abandoned the city to the ravages of the predatory, have their lessons for New York, though here, happily, the police and fire forces have shown a fine spirit by announcing that under no circumstances will they forget their duties.

What is the principle on which public employes may be justly asked to give up the right to strike? It is that their employer is non-commercial—carries on a coöperative business for the public benefit and not for private profit. With the profit-making motive removed, the presumption is that the public will deal justly with its servants. It generally has done so—a fact sufficiently attested by the circumstance that when a man has entered public employment his comrades, in times past, have been disposed to congratulate him.

But the presumption of justice becomes dead and worthless if not lived up to. And it is admitted that recently it has not been. Through a variety of causes the dollar has shrunk in purchasing power, while the increase in compensation, especially to members of the Police and Fire departments, has not been proportionately enlarged. No candid person denies the legitimacy of the demand of public employes for higher dollar salaries.

The miracle of a perfect adjustment to the new conditions is, of course, impossible; the men do not ask or expect this; but they do ask that their new real wages be brought nearer to the level of their old real wages. The city authorities, without shuffling or evasion, must meet the plain obligation laid on them. Taxpayers may be asked to give up some of the sums that have come to them from rent increases and the rise in the dollar value of property. "We must not complacently say," as Chief Magistrate McAdoo aptly remarks, "that what has happened in Boston could never by any possibility occur here," and consequently do nothing. It will be a bad day for the city if ever our guardians of life and property reach the settled conviction that they cannot count on the justice of the public—that the principle on which they have relied is not to be translated into acts.

The Minority Report

The report of the minority of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is notable for a curious gingerly reserve when it discusses the reservations. They are opposed as objectionable, but there is avoidance of specific criticism. It is said they would result in the defeat of the treaty—but why? We have been assured again and again by the President that the reservations merely set forth in other language what is already in the treaty. As reservations, he has told us, they are mere surplusage.

The minority members of the Foreign Relations Committee refrain from echoing that view. Yet they are equally unwilling to express the contrary view—that the reservations wreck the treaty because they weaken its vigor and dilute its meaning. It would be interesting to know whether Mr. Hitchcock and his five associates really believe that the heart is cut out of Article X by a statement that the United States will perform no obligations under that article except after authorization by Congress. Do they think that the covenant is ruined by a provision that the United States will allow no questions of domestic policy and no questions affecting the interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine to be passed on by the league of nations?

The minority gives no hint of its opinion on these matters. It leaves the public to infer that it opposes any modifications, verbal or otherwise, of the text of the treaty and the covenant merely because they are alterations, either technical or actual. Such a frame of mind harmonizes with the anxiety manifested in the report lest the United States by adding a word in the compact may offend the other powers represented in the peace conference and be disciplined by them by being left out in the cold in the final settlement. Such an attitude might be excused in a third-class power, eager to gather a few crumbs from the peace table. But the United States has said that it would ask no spoils from the conference. It is less concerned about what it is getting than about what it is giving. If it enters the league it will be to confer benefits rather than to receive them.

How poor-spirited, then, is the minority's insistence on the unwisdom of sacrificing by modifications of the treaty "all of the concessions secured from Germany by a dictated peace". President Wilson has said many times that the other powers look upon the United States as the cornerstone of a future society of nations. He has announced that the world's heart would be broken if America did not enter the league. Why should the world break its own heart, then, by stickling over a few concessions in the covenant which the United States may require?

The fear that Europe will leave us out in the cold if we alter the covenant is born of a ludicrous misconception of the world situation. The little which we may ask or will ask of other nations they will grant cheerfully, for their own advantage even more than for ours. Mr. Hitchcock and his colleagues are too fearsome. The future of the league depends on the United States. And the charter of the league can readily be modified, at our suggestion, to safeguard essential American interests.

Looting the Railroads

(From The Saturday Evening Post)

ATTORNEY PLUMB, representing the railroad brotherhoods, says Wall Street has looted the railroads, and cites the well known cases of the New Haven, the Rock Island and the Frisco systems. What happened in those cases, and in all others to which Mr. Plumb refers, was an overissue of railroad obligations—stock watering, in effect, though it did not always take the classic form of stock watering. But the watered roads went into bankruptcy. The old obligations were called in and cancelled, the water baled out so far as regards any present claim on their income. It cannot be shown that the looting lays any burden whatever on present freight and passenger rates. It was investors in railroad securities who were looted—not shippers or travellers or railroad labor.

The present charge against the railroads on account of the capital invested in them is about nine hundred million dollars, which the government guarantees. Even Mr. Plumb allows that there has been an honest investment in railroads to the extent of ten or twelve billion dollars which should be compensated by government bonds. Government bonds of the Victory Liberty loan, bearing 4¾ per cent interest, sell slightly below par. Applying that interest rate to a figure half way between the maximum and the minimum mentioned by Mr. Plumb, his plan would involve a charge against the railroads, on account of the capital invested in them, of about five hundred million dollars a year. But the roads to-day are not earning even that five hundred millions a year. There could be no decrease in freight and passenger rates. There could be no increase in wages without an offsetting increase in freight and passenger rates or without a deficit which would fall on the public in the shape of taxes.

If we allow Mr. Plumb's improbable contention that under his plan of mixed political and labor union management the roads would be operated more efficiently than under private management it is still clear that a long time would have to elapse before the results of that more efficient operation could make any appreciable impression on the cost of living—some years, certainly. And it is cost of living as an immediate problem that the brotherhoods are talking about. Meanwhile railroad labor has presented new wage demands which would raise the cost of transportation by at least eight hundred millions a year—a burden at least double that which Mr. Plumb's free-and-easy generalizations attribute to Wall Street loot. Subtracting four and adding eight is an odd method of reducing the cost of living.

Self-Aviating;

or,

Flying by One's Bootstraps

From Tribune Paris Bureau.

PARIS, Aug. 24.—Can a man lift himself by his bootstraps? He cannot—but it seems that he can lift himself and fly by means of power generated by his own physical action.

The newspapers are talking of the exploit of Poulain, an aviator recently demobilized, who was a famous cyclist before the war. In a machine called an "aviette," Poulain is said to have lifted himself and to have flown some twelve yards.

An "aviette" is described as a sort of winged bicycle, having no motive force save that set up by the pedalling of the rider. On such a machine Poulain pedalled swiftly over a flat space, lifted gently into the air, and still pedalling furiously, floated serenely for twelve yards, before coming unharmed to earth. Only one or two friends were present and the exploit cannot yet be regarded as "official."

The idea of the "aviette" is not new. Men were working on it before the war, and so interested had the well known firm of Peugeot become that it had established a prize of 10,000 francs for him who first "mounted on a machine, shall by his muscular action alone and over a perfectly flat surface have covered twelve metres going and coming without touching earth."

Poulain's unofficial exploit has set tongues wagging, and now there is current a story of a Frenchman who has invented a marvellous contraption whereon any one able to ride a bicycle will be able to lift himself two, three, four, ten, or even twelve metres above the earth, and to move through the air with no more effort than cycling ordinarily demands, and for such a time as his strength shall last.

France is the land of wonderful stories and the war has developed an aptitude already existent, but this last is difficult to swallow. Nevertheless, there are some who swallow it—hook, bait and sinker—and who darkly say that before the year has seen its close the world will have been startled by this invention, which means flying for everybody.

"Disorderly Conduct"

(From The Toledo Blade)

In an attempt to do a third loop an aviator in Kentucky lost control of his machine, and in the wreck which followed he and his passengers were killed.

Performing "stunts" may have been good practice for war work, since it was of benefit to know how to disconcert the aim of an enemy and how to get out of tight pinches when a pilot is pursued. But it is not clear that any of these tricks help along the promotion of aerial navigation in time of peace. Rather we would say they interfere with that promotion by making people think that aeroplanes belong rather to the outfit of a circus than to the business of cargo carrying and transporting passengers.

It is within the means of states and municipalities to regulate flying, and the time is right for putting a penalty on all attempts to cut aerial capers.

Ford's Munificent Jury

(From The Atlanta Constitution)

They may make fun of Ford's six cents' damages, but the jury knew that a nickel wouldn't get him anywhere.

The Conning Tower

Revised

Strike! Strike! Strike!
Strike in summer and fall;
Strike—strike—strike!
For anything at all!
O men, with sisters dear!
O men, with wives and relations!
It isn't employers you're wearing out
But human creatures' patience.

The shooting in Boston, it appears, is confined largely to the crap variety. They are rolling the cubes on Boston Common; and even out Concord way one may soon hear the embattled farmers shooting the point heard round the world.

Perhaps Boston is orderly, but years of reading war communiqués that said, Nothing to Report, are not without their effect upon credulity.

What Kind of a Harvard Man Wrote These?

Nobody sits down quietly for a second. It is not that kind of a farce.—From "Nightie Night" review in The Globe.

The first night audience liked the play, but was not particularly vociferous over it. It is not that sort of a play.—From "Lusmore" review in The Globe.

Advices from Boston are to the effect that even the unenterprising burglar is burgling; the felon is engaged in his employment and maturing his felonious little plans, and there is much constabulary duty to be done, to be done.

"Why should anybody want to rob a hotel?" said the innkeeper, as he raked in the three cents for the two cent newspaper.

THE DIARY OF OUR OWN SAMUEL PEPYS

September 11—Hurried through my stint, and to the courts, and S. Spaeth and I played against B. Stair and A. Hammett, and they beat us, and just as we were about to beat them, it came on to rain; so to dinner with my wife, and she with A. Woollcott to the playhouse, and she was for having me stay at home and fashion some verses, but I had no ideas, nor no inclination to work, neither, and I met Mistress Jobyna Howland, and took her for a ride in my petrol-waggon, and we called upon Mistress Daisy Garson, and then went on, and it came on to rain again, which rumpled the gray suit I had just hau pressed, and Jobyna got wet, too, but took it with a good grace, and walked home with me from the garage, which was a fine piece of sportsmanship.

12—Read in "The Moon and Sixpence" this morning until I was late to my desk, and I did not finish reading the book, but I have read enough to know that those who say there could be no such man are wrong. At my scrivening all the day, and in the evening to dinner with my cozen Milton from Chicago, and his wife, a fair girl and merry.

Nominated by W. W. E., for The Good Sports Club: Posner's Haberdashery, Washington Street, Boston. After the looters had smashed all the store's windows and looted contents, Mr. Posner now has this sign pasted on the boards covering the windows: "IF THE PERSONS who took hats, clothing, neckties, collars, etc., will return same, they will be given correct sizes."

The man is believed to have been a laborer, although he was well dressed and wore four expensive rings, carried three gold watches and several other valuable pieces of jewelry. —Evening Sun.

An error, suggests H. I. Y. For "although" read "because."

Sic Transeunt Dei

Sir: As a worshipper at the base of your Belvedere of Bunk I have heretofore always claimed virtual uniquity. As such, I would have conceded at the most, few, if any, peers (headline writers' argot for "equals"). A few months ago, however, being indisposed (more h. l. w. slang, meaning "sick"), I shot you a perfectly vapid telegram—some rot regarding pajamas—which, to my transcendent joy, promptly appeared right in the Column with regular reading matter.

Oh, boy! How I hated myself! You know, one of the gods—smart feller—superior tolerance—"See the Trib. this morning? . . . Ayup, that's me."

And then, carelessly tossing our old friend Caution to Æolus, considerably more than 2.75% stewed with success, I shoot you a second lit'ry arrow. Whang! Another redskin bites the dust! Two out of two; a world's record!

But—something is wrong. No thrill, no chortle, no chest, only—disillusionment. Anybody, apparently, can do it. My gods are, after all, only clay;* tinselled* mortals. And so another Santy Claus is carried away with muffled drums and the heavy tramp of feet. "Quos vult perdere, Jupiter dementat."

H. B. S.

*I am aware that, owing to post-war conditions, quotations on clay and tinsel, grade A, are abnormally high, but they have not, as yet, quite reached the price of the real article.

P. S.—I wish now I hadn't torn up that poem I thought was so rotten it wouldn't get by. Let's see, how did that go? Oh, yes:

"Why waste your time," sneers Ruth, "with Irvin Cobb'r
Lardner?" Here my soul begins to grovel.
"You really ought to read J. Henri Fabre.
You'll find it more exciting than a novel."

Regarding the resignation of Secretary Redfield, the esteemed Columbia Record says that once before he got on the front page with a story about shark steaks or something.

An elaborate telegram from T. Groves is to the effect that Boston now is the Land of the Spree and the Home of the Knave.

Speaking of profiteering, now that grapes are no longer used for making wine a glass of grape juice now costs 15c.

Every motorist who has waited for the traffic cop's signal knows how the Bostonian feels with the strike on.

As six contribs have bothered to inform us, the steel strike probably will not begin before the coppers' strike has ended.

Last line, from Richard III, Act V, Scene 3: "Think on the Tower and me; despair and die."

F. P. A.

Who Serve and Are Last

Letters from Policemen and Firemen

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: Thank you for the fight your paper is making for a salary increase for the police and firemen. I am a policeman, appointed just before the war broke out. I am married and have two children. My salary for the first three years is $100 a month. Next year, after three years of service, I shall be raised to $1,350.

I had to borrow $100 from the Morris Plan. I am paying $10 per month on that loan; $20 a month rent; $1 to the pension fund; $2 bed money; $1 shoe shine; $2 insurance, and about $3 gas bill. That leaves me with about $60 a month to support myself, my wife and two children.

The fact that I am a policeman didn't stop the landlord from raising my rent $5 a month.

It has been argued that policemen save money because they do not have to pay carfares. Motormen and other transportation employes do not have to pay carfares either. Here is a table showing the difference between motormen's wages and patrolmen's wages during the past five years:

	Motormen	Patrolmen
1915.....	$1,100	$1,500
1916.....	1,250	1,550
1917.....	1,800	1,550
1918.....	1,800	1,650
1919.....	2,184	1,650

The $2,184 paid to motormen is for a straight ten-hour day, with time and a half for overtime. The policeman's day is 10½ hours, counting patrol and reserve, and taking no count of strikes, parades and other extra duty.

A motorman's uniform costs $28; a policeman's overcoat costs $77.

A patrolman's pension costs him $3 per month. A motorman's pension costs him 50 cents a month. I was a motorman before I came into the Police Department and I understand both jobs.

I do not believe that a policeman should belong to a labor union, but if the city does not treat us fairly you will find that the young patrolmen will drop out and go to other jobs, which they can easily get.

A HARD-PRESSED COP.

New York, Sept. 10, 1919.

The Cost of a Coat

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: I am seventeen years in the Police Department and this is the first year that I could not afford to go into the country with my wife.

I was ordered to get a new winter overcoat, but the tailor refused to take my order because I was unable to deposit $20, the balance of the $75 to be paid before taking the coat out of the shop. Formally this coat could be purchased for $28.

I have no children and am therefore better off than many policemen and firemen I know with families. Some of them are in debt for all they can get.

Unless there is a substantial increase in the salary of policemen there will be different material on the force in the future, at least of the young men of the department, as a great many of them are about to quit.

There is also the matter of reserve duty, which compels a patrolman to do eight hours' reserve every third day, in addition to his daily eight hours patrol. Not once in the eight years I have been in the department have I seen an occasion when the reserves were of any use.

In the event of any emergency arising, by the time they got there the emergency had passed. The flashlight and signal boxes have removed the necessity for the reserve, yet the authorities continue to put the men and their families to this unnecessary inconvenience and hardship. A COP.

New York, Sept. 9, 1919.

The Worst Paid

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: The cost of a patrolman's equipment has more than doubled in the past three years. The patrolman must pay the increased prices for everything—foodstuffs, rent and clothes—as must every one else. But the patrolman's pay has remained practically at a standstill.

In the last drive the police sold about $151,000,000 of Victory bonds. In the railway strike we worked night and day to protect the lives of the citizens who took a chance riding on the cars. One patrolman lost his life doing this, only a few weeks ago in Brooklyn. We are not kicking about what we have to do, but we do feel that we are not being paid for what we are doing. We are called "the finest," but we are paid the worst. A PATROLMAN.

New York, Sept. 9, 1919.

Weakening Morale

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: Do the heads of the city government understand the weakening of the morale of the Police Department which is going on to-day under the constant pressure of the patrolmen's attempt to make their present salaries meet the increasing cost of living? How can the Police Department be restored to its former high standard if the morale of the men is broken? New York City has the best police force in the world, but how is the city going to keep its good men when unskilled laborers in many trades are getting from $35 to $45 a week and a policeman's pay continues to range from $1,200 to $1,650 a year? A POLICEMAN.

New York, Sept. 9, 1919.

Who Bars the Way?

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: It isn't necessary to tell you or the people what our salary is. They know how little we are getting, and I know that the majority of the taxpayers are perfectly satisfied that we should get our increase. The only man who is standing in the way of our increase is the Mayor. A COP.

New York, Sept. 9, 1919.

What a Woman Knows

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: Why not get at the policemen's wives? They are the ones who feel present conditions the hardest.

They have no time to spend with their husbands, for by the time a patrolman gets home he goes to sleep, to rest up for the next tour. Yesterday my husband went on duty at 4 p. m. and was off duty at midnight. He arrived home at 1 a. m., and had to get up at 6 a. m., to go over to New York for parade duty, where he had to report at 8 o'clock. Patrolmen get no extra pay for overtime, remember. The same thing happens when he has to go to court on his thirty-two hours off.

If our husbands don't get an increase in pay, they cannot help but get discouraged and leave their duty slide. What's the use?

A POLICEMAN'S WIFE.

Brooklyn, Sept. 9, 1919.

Performing a Miracle!

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: The salary of a first grade fireman is about $135 a month; second grade, $115, and third grade, $98.

I am a first grade fireman. My monthly expenses, which must be met, are as follows:

Endowments	$7.25
House tax	2.50
Liberty bond	4.00
Rent	22.00
Total	$35.75

This leaves less than $100 a month, of which I keep $15 a month for pocket expenses. This leaves my wife $85 a month on which to run our household and to provide clothes for herself and our child. Add to this the expense of firemen's outfits and rubber clothing. How the lower grade firemen get along is a miracle!

All we ask is a square deal.

PARSIMONIOUS FIREMAN.

New York, Sept. 10, 1919.

The Pay of a Recruit

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: One of the most important features about the patrolmen's pay is the fact that for the first three years a patrolman is in the Police Department he gets only $1,200 a year. After that he must work two more years before he receives the maximum rate of $1,650. Yet any mistakes he makes during that first five years, when he is paid as a recruit, he must answer for just the same as the man who is getting the salary of a full fledged patrolman.

I receive $49 on payday. An eighteen-year-old boy, who lives in the same house, gets $28 a week. Do you wonder that he gives me the laugh?

ONE OF "THE FINEST,
BUT PAID THE POOREST.

New York, Sept. 9, 1919.

In Hock Ever Since

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: I have been on the police force only a little over a year, but I already find it hard to exist on the salary I receive. I had to outfit myself shortly after I graduated from training school, and I had to borrow the money to do it. I have been in hock ever since.

The Mayor and Police Commissioner are reported to be in favor of a substantial increase in the salaries of members of the department over the rank of patrolman, but what about the patrolmen themselves? They are the backbone of the department and always the least thought of.

A PATROLMAN.

New York, Sept. 10, 1919.

After Eleven Years

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: I have seen nearly eleven years' service in the Police Department. I am married and have two children. My landlord has notified me of a further rent increase of $5 a month, which makes an increase of $60 a year.

I am waiting to see what the new year will bring, for it is impossible for a patrolman to bring his family up to be useful citizens on the present rate.

I am $240 in debt after eleven years of service, and 50 per cent of the patrolmen are similarly at the mercy of the loan sharks.

A PATROLMAN.

New York, Sept. 8, 1919.

Cost of Equipment

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: To the list of the equipment required for a patrolman, given in your paper, I wish to add the articles listed here:

Rubber coat	$7.50
Rubber boots	7.00
Rubber cap cover	1.00
Rubber gloves	1.00
Rubbers	2.50
Mattress (hair)	15.00
Bedclothes (two sets)	5.00
Blanket	5.00
Bedspreads (two)	5.00
Holster and belt	5.00
Nippers	1.00
Billies (night and dress batons and strap)	3.00
Tassel for dress baton	1.00
Numbers for batons and pistol	.25
Lock for station house locker	.25
Cap plate	.40
Precinct numbers (three sets)	1.20
Summer gloves (six pairs)	2.40
Total	$83.50

Three pairs of shoes is the smallest number any patrolman can get along with. A fountain pen and indelible pencil are essential for his work.

This brings the expenses of a first year patrolman up to $250. The city should either furnish this equipment of raise the patrolman's pay.

A ROOKIE PATROLMAN.

New York, Sept. 10, 1919.

A Citizen Remembers

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: Your editorial on the firemen's pay reminds me that at the time of the Equitable fire these men endured terrible hardships, and all sorts of promises were made regarding the betterment of their conditions. These promises apparently were never kept, and the whole matter seems to have been forgotten.

During the war the firemen worked day and night and had only one day off in ten. Yet they never received any extra compensation for their vigilance. Their families have been subjected to the same increases in the cost of living as have the rest of the people, and I honestly think that the least which can be done to express the public's appreciation of their untiring efforts is to grant them their demands for more pay. A CITIZEN.

New York, Sept. 10, 1919.

Tree Wisdom

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: There was printed in The Tribune a few days ago the substance of a circular recently issued by the National Forestry Association, presumably with government sanction, in relation to a proposed widespread planting of trees, ostensibly for memorial purposes. Apparently an abstract of more extended matter, the statement appears to lack details very desirable in relation to so important a subject in order to insure the attention and interest it deserves. For nearly a hundred years we have been dealing improvidently with the incomparable endowments of nature, its indigenous forests and waters in particular. This neglect, in part, may be atoned for by planting trees as a national duty throughout the land during recurring seasons, under persistent coöperation of the government and the people. Everybody loves trees, but few, comparatively, are qualified out of hand to plant them properly. Several departments of the government at Washington have been active in the dissemination of valuable information on the general subject of vegetation and of allied interests, issued from time to time in the form of learned documents on the respective subjects treated. These are of undoubted interest and value, but not adapted for popular use. They occupy valued space in college and high school libraries and may be found there in excellent state of preservation, many of them with uncut leaves.

What is needed is a vast supply of circulars adapted to the man in the street, the school teacher and pupil, easily to be read and as readily understood, and to be freely had at suitable supply stations, the schools, public department offices, parks, etc. For this purpose we have a resource in the greatest printing establishment in the world, at Washington, and to what better use could it be applied?

Any one of those representing the Interior, the Agricultural, the Forestry Department and the National Forestry Association can supply the matter for such a circular, which, briefly, should state in simple terms the kinds of trees, with geographical limitations, if needed, available for roadside and general use. Our indigenous and acclimated trees are ample for every service we may ask of them, in variety and adaptability. The reader must be told that the tree should preferably be a nursery raised tree, whether for field, garden or roadside use, sound, characteristically developed, with substantial roots and planted in the proper season—spring or fall—in a good-sized pit, filled with good top soil. Young saplings from the woods rarely make old, well formed trees; trees under two inches in diameter lack strength and assured form to grow shapely. And then, when planted, the trees should become the wards of those having kindly interest in their continued welfare.

Really, Mr. Editor, the field is a good one for exploitation at this time. As an added incentive, if any is needed, let us recall what has happened within the last five years in France and Belgium in the unutterably cruel destruction and devastation inflicted upon their extensive territories by the ruthless enemy, whose complete subjection is still in doubt.

JOHN Y. CULYER.

New York, Sept. 9, 1919.

Laughing at Death

(From The Hartford Courant)

Maine newspapers tell of a resident of Lewiston, in that state, who, on Tuesday last, while suffering from a violent thirst, drank a quart of spirits of nitre and a pint of Jamaica ginger. Several things occurred immediately thereafter, but the death of the Lewiston man was not one of these things. He became very ill, and his skin turned green, but he recovered, and is now in condition to continue his experiments with drugs.

The story suggests that physicians have not yet learned the possibilities of the human body, which they study so carefully, nor do they know to what strange things it may accustom itself, but they may realize that if the Lewiston man had spent six months in preparing for this internal bath of nitre and alcohol he might have swallowed a larger quantity without great inconvenience. Given due notice as to what is expected of it, the human interior will adapt itself to many drugs which, if introduced to it suddenly, prove fatal.

We may assume that man learned to use opium to excess shortly after he discovered that a bitter gum oozed from the stalk of the poppy, and since then he has taken other liberties with his table of contents and has been not much the worse for it. Nicotine is a poison, by all the rules of toxicology, but many a man thoroughly enjoys this form of poison. Arsenic is lethal, yet there are arsenic eaters. A few acids, sulphuric, nitric, muriatic and carbolic, are as yet not classed among the habit forming drugs, and the man who swallows even a small quantity of any one of these will not call for more in this world, but there are many poisons to which man may render himself indifferent. There may be scientists who study this subject, but they have not covered the field as yet.

For Free Business

AT A meeting of the Western Council of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, held at Chicago, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"Resolved, That the continued happiness and prosperity of the American people so utterly depend upon the success and prosperity of American business that public opinion should be aroused in opposition to legislation now being urged in Congress regulating the conduct of business by license, this opposition being based on these grounds:

"(1) That the licensing principle cannot be introduced except in such general terms that it could soon be interpreted to include all lines of business, even the press and advertising.

"(2) That such power over business and the freedom of the press is too vast and dangerous to trust in the hands of any man or set of men, and is contrary to American institutions.

"(3) That increased production is the sure, sane and economical way to reduce costs of goods of every nature.

"(4) That increased production can only come from free and untrammelled competition between individual manufacturers and producers, seeking in every legitimate way to develop new and existing markets.

"(5) That any legislation, state or national, that tends to restrict competition or reduce production, through licensing or otherwise, is adverse to the common good."